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ABSTRACT

Eight abstracts provide key points of papers presented at the 1985 meeting of the Camping Research Section of the American Camping Association. Topics discussed were: the effects of a one-week resident camp experience on environmental attitudes, goals and accomplishments of the National Outdoor Education Consortium for Research and Evaluation, the effectiveness of participant observers as a research technique for camping, attitudes influencing a counselor's decision to return to work at a camp, the status of women outdoor adventure leaders in the United States, continuing education for camp directors, evaluation of successful program components, and the nature of the camping experience for 8- to 10-year-old girls. (JHZ)

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1985 ACA

"'BETTER CAMPING FOR ALL' THROUGH RESEARCH"

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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"'BETTER CAMPING FOR ALL' THROUGH RESEARCH"

Proceedings of the Annual Meeting

of the

Camping Research Section

of the

American Camping Association

Karla Henderson, Compiler
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Prepared for Distribution at the Symposium

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Schedule for 1985 ACA Research Symposium

"Better Camping for All Through Research"

Wednesday, March 13, 1985

9-10:30 a.m. Camping Research: How Camp Directors Can Become Involved
Moderator: Gale Orford, Camp Tamarack, Oregon
A session providing the background of camping research--what has been done to date, needs for research--what should be studied, methods of research--how research can be done in your camp, and wisdom from experience--what to ask and look out for.
Presentors: Hobie Woods, Roughing It, California, "Camping Research: Yesterday - Today - Tomorrow"
Mary Faeth Chenery, Indiana University, and Judy Meyers, Trailblazers, New Jersey, "What A Camp Director Can Do"
Karla A. Henderson and M. Deborah Bialeschki, University of Wisconsin, "Participant Observation"

10:45-12:15 Research on Camp Leadership
Moderator: Karla A. Henderson, University of Wisconsin
Papers: William Becker, Southern Georgia University, "Counselor Satisfaction"
Rita Yerkes, Miami University, Ohio and Wilma Miranda, Northern Illinois University, "Women Outdoor Adventure Leaders"
Linda Byrd, George Williams College and CCI, "Continuing Education for the Camp Director"
Lorraine Smith, Indiana University, "A Case Study of the Nature of the Camp Counselors' Experience"
Reactants: M. Deborah Bialeschki, University of Wisconsin
Howard Boyd, Gwynn Valley, North Carolina

2:00-3:30 p.m. Research on the Evaluation of Camping Programs
Moderator: Alan Wright, American Baptist Churches, Rhode Island
Papers: Steve Hollenhorst, Appalachia State University, and Alan Ewert, Ohio State University, "Importance - Performance Evaluation: A Method of Discussing Successful Program Components"
Tom Chestnut, University of Alabama, "Effects on Resident Camp on Environmental Attitudes"
William Hammerman, San Francisco State University and Mary Faeth Chenery, Indiana University, "Consortium on Evaluating Outdoor Education Programs"
Mary Faeth Chenery, Indiana University, "The Nature of the Camping Experience for Young Children"
Reactants: Frank Levine, University of Southern Maine
Jeff Glick, Variety Club Camp, Pennsylvania
Glen Poulter, Bear Pole Ranch, Colorado

EFFECTS OF RESIDENT CAMPING UPON ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES

J. Thomas Chesnutt
University of Alabama

Problem

Growth in cognitive understanding has not produced the result desired by individuals concerned with the environment, that being, general change in care given to the environment. The first step in this process is to develop an awareness, to help individuals acquire strong feelings of concern for the environment. The organized camp setting is a logical setting for the initiating and nurturing of positive environmental awareness. First, organized camps have a heavy stake in environmental education since, with few exceptions, the total camp atmosphere is heavily dependent upon a pleasing natural environment. Also, it is easier to address attitudes and values in a camp setting than in the schools. Not only are the counselors with the campers in a group living experience, but many parents are willing for their children to be taught values in camp, while the teaching of values is often a controversial issue in the schools. Admittedly, merely establishing positive environmental attitudes is not the total solution, for positive attitudes do not necessarily lead to the desired behavior toward the environment. The establishment of attitudes is, however, the first step in establishing values, which in turn leads to the desired behavior. The American Camping Association, Christian Camping International, and many writers in the field have identified the development of a sense of "at home-ness" in the natural world as an objective of organized camping. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a one-week resident camp experience upon environmental atittudes.

Method

Attitude change through the organized camp experience may result either by chance or by design. Attitude change by chance is simply placing the campers in the organized camp setting, the sole independent variable being contact with the natural environment through the camp program. Change by design involves specific attitudinal strategies incorporated into the regular camp program. This study was designed to compare the two methods of affecting environmental attitude change. The experimental group consisted of 30 subjects who were campers at an agency camp in northeastern Minnesota. The median age was 9.83 years and 65% were from urban environments. While environmental education was but one of many emphases at the camp, it definitely was a strong emphasis. The resources in the camp were: fenced areas to observe plant succession, a nature hut, displays around camp, and preserved natural damage areas. The experiences included into the program were nature hikes, quiet times in the outdoors, history of the area, and environmental projects. The control group consisted of 40 campers at another agency camp in northeastern Minnesota. The median age of this group was 10.40 years and 56% were from urban environments. This camp had no special enironmental education emphasis other than the natural setting. The instrument utilized was the 43 item Outdoor Issues questionnaire developed by Millward to measure the environmental attitudes of grade school children. Analyses of data were performed through SPSS paired observations and independent t tests statistical procedures at a .05 significance level.

Results

The change by design group demonstrated significant gains on 2 items when compared to the change by chance group. However, the control group also had significant increases on 2 items. When all subjects were considered as a whole, attitudes increased significantly on 6 items and decreased on 1 item. Additional analyses were made based upon sex, grade in school, and location of home. Analysis by gender revealed that females improved significantly over males on 8 items while males had an increase on only 1 item. Three significant differences were found based upon location of residence, and for all 3 items, subjects from rural areas improved over subjects living in urban areas. Finally, fourth and fifth graders increased on 3 items when compared to sixth and seventh graders.

Conclusions

Although significant differences were found between the groups, the differences were few and inconsistent. Based upon the results of this study one could not conclude that the change by design was more effective than change by chance in improving environmental attitudes. Possible explanations for the lack of conclusive findings are that attitudes take considerable time to develop and that the magnitude of affect size between the two treatments is small. However, it was encouraging to find that when both groups were combined, attitudes increased on 14% of the items and decreased on only 2% of the items. This demonstrated that small change is possible in a short time though a combination of planned environmental strategies and continual contact with the environment. Furthermore, change by design appeared to be more effective for females, younger subjects, and those from a rural environment, but again these improvements were small. This study was designed to be but an initial step in determining the effectiveness of changing environmental attitudes through the resident camp experence. From here studies should be conducted using greater numbers of subjects, longer periods of time, and additional control groups which receive no environmental education and are not located in a natural setting. Additional research should also examine to what degree change in environmental attitudes will result in environmental behavioral change.

Abstract

Research and Evaluation in Resident Outdoor Education Centers: Development of a National Consortium and Establishment of Priorities for Study

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As a result of interest in research and evaluation expressed by directors of camps and outdoor education centers, a national consortium has been formed to serve as a communications and cooperation network. The National Outdoor Education Consortium for Research and Evaluation is coordinated by the Institute for Education (P.O. Box 807, Daly City, CA 94015) and at the present time has 25 members.

An original survey in 1981-82 examined the range of evaluation methods and results used by resident outdoor education (ROE) centers. A report on that survey was presented to the ACA Research Symposium in 1983 and is published in the Winter 1985 issue of the Journal of Environmental Education. A second survey asked center directors to identify their priorities for topics for research. From this survey there appears to be an interest and need to gather evaluation/research data related to two questions:

1. What are the benefits of the ROEE* for students (a) academically, (b) socially, (c) psychologically, and (d) attitudinally?

2. Which teaching techniques and/or experiences are most effective in achieving the greatest improvement (a) academically, (b) socially, (c) psychologically, and/or (d) attitudinally in children during a ROEE?

The next step should be efforts to identify promising research techniques and instruments that could be shared across centers.

Any resident outdoor education center that wishes to join and participate in this effort for research and evaluation should contact the Institute for ECO Education.

*ROEE = resident outdoor education experience

Proposal for presentation to ACA (Atlanta, Georgia)

Title: Participant Observation as a Research Technique for Camping

Karla A. Henderson and M. Deborah Bialeschki
University of Wisconsin

Objectives and Purposes:

It is frequently difficult to quantify the outcomes of a personal experience. Much of the research on changes in behavior as a result of a camp experience have been difficult to reduce to numbers. Rating scales have been inadequate in documenting what really happens to people in camp situations. Thus, the need exists for viewing new paradigms of research which can be used in the camp setting. The purpose of this study was to explore the use of participant observation (ethnography) as a possible means for conducting camping research.

The specific objectives of the study were:

To use the participation observation method in a short-term situation to assess its feasibility in an outdoor setting.

To ascertain the strengths and problems associated with participant observer research.

To develop quidelines which might be of interest to others who wish to employ this technique in camping research.

Methods Used

The purpose of the larger study which used this ethnographic method was to evaluate the experience of adult women participating in a camping experience. In the particpant observation, the two researchers spent a week at a resident camp with the women observing the activities that were done. The Women's Week was sponsored by the Black Hawk Council of Girl Scouts and was in its ninth year of operation.

Participant observation research includes participating as a group member while recording the actions of the group. These data were systematically analyzed using qualitative approaches with the development of themes as the primary research results.

Summary of Results

The participant observation method applied in a camp setting appeared to be quite good for a number of reasons. It was a realistic way to look at the qualitative dimension of the camping experience. The systematic collection of data allowed

for a "scientific" means of analyzing the data. Findings occurred independent of hypothesized outcomes. In addition, the data collection process was unobtrusive.

Several problems did exist in conducting this kind of research. Observer bias was a possibility. It takes practice to be a good ethnographer. In making observations there is a tendency to be too general or to make too many interpretations. The method requires a great deal of concentration and intensity to be worthwhile.

Tips are suggested further for researchers and camp directors wishing to conduct research using this methodology.

Implications

The technique applied to camping research ought to receive further exploration. It is a valuable technique because: virtually anyone can use it after training and practice, word descriptions are often more useful than numbers in describing complex social phenomena such as outcomes from camping, the technique is holistic and integrative just like the camp situation, and it allows an intuitive view to be systematized. The technique may be an important method for more fully describing the results of camping programs.

Dr. William A. Becker

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A STUDY OF CAMP COUNSELOR RETENTION

or

WHY DO COUNSELORS RETURN TO WORK AT CAMP?

In order to better understand the attitudes that influence a counselor's decision to return to work at camp, a study was undertaken to analyze the differing attitudes between male and female returning camp counselors at agency and private camps using six attitudinal dimensions of camp counselor retention, which were developed by the investigator. A random sample of returning camp counselor at 15 agency camps and 15 private camps (all accredited by the ACA) in the northeast were selected for the study. Seventeen of the camps responded by the deadline date and returned 193 usable counselor questionnaire forms.

The results of the mean scores and the Multivariate analysis of variance calculations represent information gathered from the returning camp counselors on the importance each attitudinal dimension had in influencing their decision to return to work at camp. The attitudinal dimensions were developed from the thirty items in the counselor questionnaire. The attitudinal dimensions were: (a) stimulation or inspiration, (b) living conditions, (c) job related experience, (d) camp administration, (e) personal, and (f) travel and location. The returning counselors responded on a 5-point Likert scale which ranged from a low of one, no importance, to a high of 5, very important. The mean scores were reported for female and male counselors at both agency and private camps. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was calculated to determine if there was any over-all attitudinal difference between male and female counselors at both agency and private camps. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated for each of the six attitudinal dimensions to determine if there was significant difference on the importance of each dimension between male and female counselors at agency and private camps.

The results for male and female private camp counselors indicated that they had differing feelings toward the attitudinal dimensions. The MANOVA results, .118, indicated that there was a wide range of responses for one or more of the attitudinal dimensions. The ANOVA results confirmed these findings by indicating significant difference between male and female counselors on the job related experience attitudinal dimension. The rank order of attitudinal dimension mean scores by camp type and sex show that male and female private camp counselors ranked the attitudinal dimensions in a different order of importance. These results show that male and female private camp counselors had different dimensions that influenced their decision to return to work at camp. The female private camp counselors felt that the job related experience attitudinal dimension was most important in influencing their decision to return to work at camp. The male private camp counselors felt that the personal attitudinal dimension was most important and ranked job related experience fourth.

The results of this study can tell agency and private camp directors much about why their counselors return to work at camp. Agency camp directors should be aware that both their male and female counselors, and private camp directors their male counselors, ranked the personal attitudinal dimension first. The items in the personal attitudinal dimension and examples of the specific reasons cited by counselors may be the key to providing a more meaningful work experience to many camp counselors.

The job related experience attitudinal dimension was ranked first by female private camp counselors and second by both male and female agency camp counselors. This was a major change from the studies done during the 1950's and 60's were the main reasons to work at camp were the outdoors, travel and fun. Camp directors should be aware that counselors are looking for job related experience to enter a very competitive job market. Camps can help counselors by offering good staff training programs and the opportunities for counselors to exercise their skills.

ABSTRACT
American Camping Association
1985 "Camping Research Symposium
Presentation Proposal

Title: Women Outdoor Adventure Leaders

Authors: Dr. Rita Yerkes & Dr. Wilma Miranda
Miami University Northern Illinois University

Presenter: Dr. Rita Yerkes

Research Problem:

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the status of women outdoor adventure leaders in the United States. More specifically, data was gathered to develop a professional profile of women leaders which included general characteristics, goals, training, employment conditions and other issues related to outdoor leadership.

Methodology:

With the cooperation of outdoor professional organizations and Women Outdoors, Incorporated 200 questionnaires were sent to women outdoor adventure leaders and 130 were returned for a return rate of 65 percent. The responses came from the Northeast, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-west, Southwest and West Coast areas of the United States.

Results:

The professional profile of women outdoor leaders indicates the following: they are predominately white, middle class, educated women. Thirty-nine percent hold a college degree and 40 percent have completed some college course work. Thirty-two percent have held their present position for one year or less. Sixty-six percent have worked 5 to 10 years in outdoor adventure leadership. The majority of those responding were 30 years of age or younger and 70 percent reported that their income level was less than $8,000 per year.

To assess professional goals and issues, the respondents represented four different groups. These were women leaders who worked for All-Women's programs, Outward Bound, Universities and Primary/Secondary Schools. When asked to indicate why they had become outdoor leaders 95 percent responded that they like the outdoors, cherish nature and like to teach skills.

In assessing leadership style, the women in this study preferred to lead a group who could relax and enjoy nature rather than push hard all of the time. They preferred group members who would take responsibility for group pace and level of challenge. They also encouraged group members to exhibit good cheer, mutual care and sharing in the successes of others.

Seventy percent of the leaders indicated their awareness that their gender is a factor in the group's perception of the leader. Forty-six percent noted that it takes longer for male participants to accept a woman as leader. However 72 percent stated that their leadership role encouraged women in their groups to be more independent.

When asked to rank the top qualities of an outdoor leader, these leaders stated effective risk and safety management first, and communication and group processing skills as their second choice. In addition these leaders who are often one of the few women in a program, indicated a need to network with other women in similiar leadership situations.

Implications for the Camp Director:

Although only a beginning this is the first study to provide current research on the status of professional women outdoor adventure leaders. This research is important to camp directors who recruit and hire outdoor adventure staff. In addition during the past 10 years there has been a significant increased demand

for adventure offerings in the camp program by girls and women. These programs need women leaders to direct and serve as role models for this clientele.

The numbers of women outdoor adventure leaders are increasing. However, the camping profession should encourage strategies for equal opportunities for positions and salary compensation. More studies are needed to develop our limited data base in outdoor adventure leadership.

Abstract Presented to
the
American Camping Association

Linda C. Byrd
George Williams College & Christian Camping International/U.S. Division
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The development of a valid and reliable instrument which identified the professional competency needs of Christian Camping International/U.S. Division (CCI/U.S.) executive members, indicated their perception of the association's effectiveness in providing services and programs to member camps, and described the demographic composition of CCI/U.S. member camps was the purpose of this study. The instrument was designed to serve as a functional tool for CCI/U.S. which when administered would provide data enabling the CCI/U.S. Board of Directors to adapt and develop member services uniquely needed by Christian camping leaders. The instrument was created with the intent of being used for repeated administrations over a period of years.

The nature of the study was methodological and involved the development of an instrument. The appropriate type of instrument was selected based on a review of the literature, an examination of the factors of validity and reliability, research concerning instrument development, and the formulations of objectives for the instrument. A mailed, self-administered questionnaire was chosen as the most efficient means of obtaining the data. The instrument was titled the CCI/U.S. Member Camp Survey. The content of the instrument and the individual items contained within were determined by the objectives and the specific data desired from the study. A pre-pilot test established content validity. A pilot study conducted with a random sample of 10% of the population for whom the questionnaire was designed provided additional data used in revising the final draft of the instrument. Reliability was established by phone interviewing 25 (31%) respondants and cross-checking their responses.

Critiques and comments given by respondants to the pre-pilot and pilot studies guided the changes made in the instrument for the final draft. The pre-pilot study had a 60% response rate. The response rate for the pilot study was 70%. Items with a 20% non-response or less than 20% reliability were reworked to increase the potential of obtaining the desired data from those items. The instrument's content, wording, sequencing, format, design, and response structure were analyzed and evaluated. A final draft of the questionnaire was submitted to CCI/U.S. for administration to the association's executive members (population approximately 850).

Recognizing the need for associations to be aware of and responsive to the needs of its members, the leadership of CCI/U.S. sought to assess the perception of its effectiveness in meeting members' needs. The development of this instrument was a preliminary step in that process. While characterized by diversity, Christian camping leaders desire to further their education and experience in more effectively administering their respective ministries. Membership in CCI/U.S. indicates a willingness to be involved in that process.

IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: A METHOD OF DISCERNING SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

[1]Steve Hollenhorst

[2]Alan Ewert

Abstract. Today we are seeing a unprecedented increase in the number of people participating in outdoor adventure programs. In response, many organizations, including a growing number of camps, are initiating or expanding into various types of adventure programming. The vexing problem these organizations then encounter is program design. The design modality most often emulated is that of Outward Bound, yet although the "Outward Bound process" has been extensively researched, little effort has been directed at determining how various program components or activities contribute to the satisfaction of the participant. Specifically, there is yet no method for these organizations to determine which adventure program components are most important or for discerning how effectively these components are being delivered.

In recent years, an innovative concept in program evaluation has been developed. Adopted from a marketing tool, this concept, termed IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, enables the organization to determine from the users (or potential users) the relative importance of various components which make up the entire program effort. The technique than receives from the user an indication of how effectively the organization delivered each of these elements.

---

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In this particular application of the importance-performance tool, the purpose of the study was multifaceted:

1. To determine from the participant which adventure program activities were considered personally important;

2. To ascertain any changes occurring during or after the course in regard to importance rating;

3. To determine from the participants which adventure program activities were delivered effectively by the organization.

The results of both the importance and performance ratings will be plotted on a matrix which is divided into four quadrants (see diagram). The first quadrant (Quadrant I) will indicate those program items which are of highest importance to the participant and received the highest performance ratings by them. Items falling into this quadrant indicate that the program has done a commendable job at meeting these important needs.

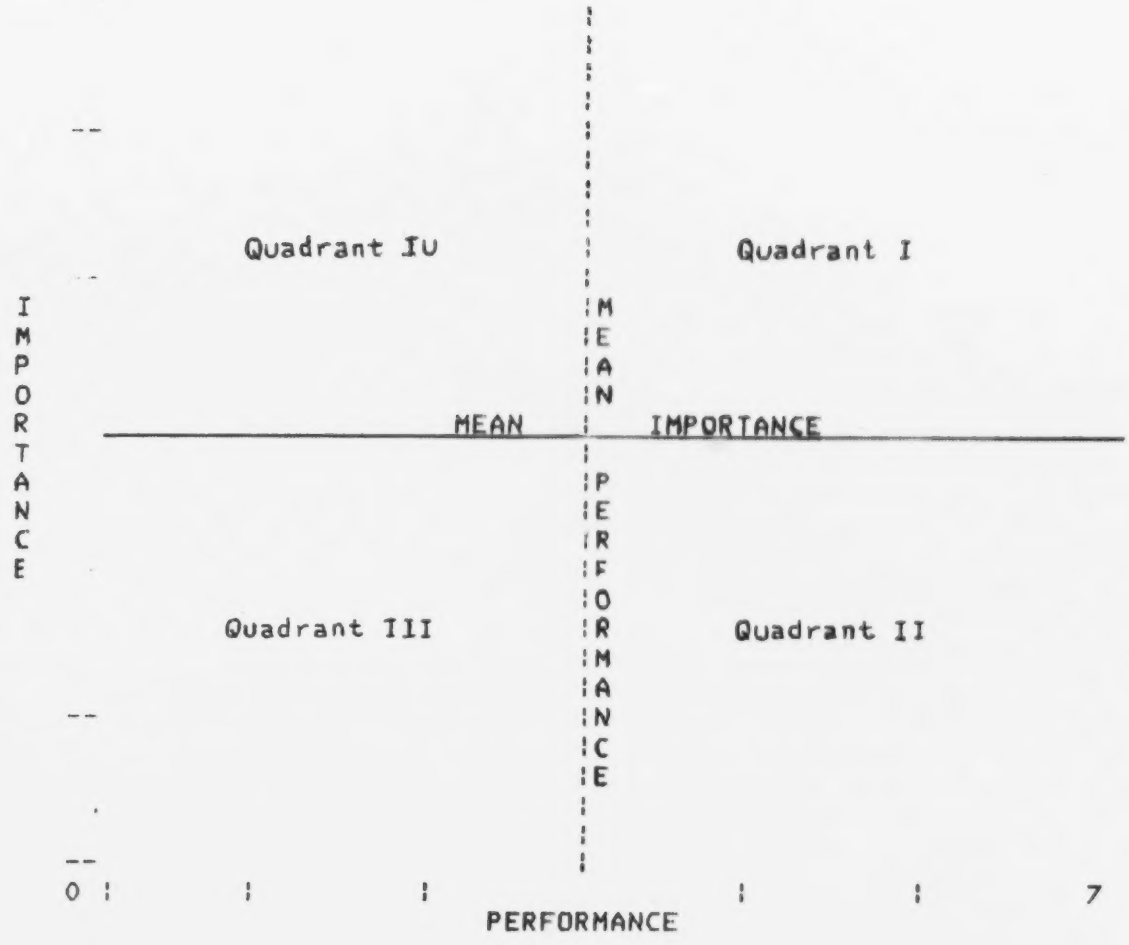
Quadrant II indicates those program items which are of lower importance to participants, but were rated high in performance. Items in this category indicate that a good job is being done in delivering these items but that additional efforts are probably <u>not</u> warranted.

Quadrant III indicates items which are of lower importance to participants but also were rated low in performance. This would indicate that some attention is needed in improving the delivery of these items, but they are not of relative importance to warrant a great deal of energy and resources.

Quadrant IV, however, is the most critical in terms of program evaluation. This will include those items which are of high importance to participants, but rated low in performance. These program items should receive priority attention.

Questionnaires were completed by roughly 100 students attending the Voyaguer Outward Bound School during the Summer and Fall of 1984. It is expected that the result of the study will show significant differences in the importance of various course components as perceived by the participant, along with significant differences in regard to the affectiveness of this organization in delivering these components.

Diagram 1. IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MATRIX



Abstract

The Nature of the Camp Experience for Young Children

This small scale pilot study examined the nature of the camp experience for young girls, ages 8 through 10, who took part in a resident camp experience for sessions of 26 days during the summer of 1984. The girls attended a private camp for girls in the Northwest. Twenty girls were part of the study during the first session, while twenty-two girls composed this age group during the second half of the summer.

The underlying paradigm of the study was that of naturalistic inquiry, which suggests that phenomena are best studied in the natural setting and that the uniqueness of each situation makes generalization unwise. Nonetheless, there is a great deal to learn from studying specific cases. The methods used were participant-observation, interviewing, and data gathering from records. The study attempted to provide a "thick description" of the camp setting and of the experience of the campers in order that subsequent researchers may compare this setting with those of settings employed in future research. The building of a knowledge base across settings and years may enable the development of theory in the field of camping.

The study should be considered a pilot study because the researchers (the author and a colleague cooperating with this research while doing a different study) were not able to gather sufficiently comprehensive information. This resulted in part from the fact that both researchers served as camp staff (the "participant" part) and that they erred on the side of unobtrusiveness of the research, wanting to make little noticeable impact in the camp experience. Nonetheless, some of the observations, though they should be viewed as tentative, may be of value in describing the camp experience for these young girls.

Observations. The philosophy of the camp emphasized giving children the opportunity to make choices; thus, campers had the freedom to choose whether to go or not to classes and to other activities each day. Observations of the girls during the days showed that a lot of their time was spent in imaginative play in their cabins. They attended and enjoyed riding and tennis classes and spent time in the arts and crafts area and in swimming, but a good deal of time between activities was spent playing in the cabin. During the first session, the youngest girls tended to play "house", while in the second session, the girls were more likely to play "fortress." During both sessions, relationships with older campers (the "seniors") were very important. For the older campers there was also a good deal of imaginative play, but the plots seemed to be more elaborate--playing "store" or "hospital."

When asked what they got out of camp, these young girls reported that they learned to get along with others and that they made friends. Although conflicts with cabin members seemed intense and difficult at times, the girls acknowledged that the problems were usually over in a few minutes. One camper said that she liked "being trusted by the older people"--you didn't always have to have a counselor with you.

There seemed to be a natural cycle of friendships and conflicts over the 26 day sessions. By the end of the second week, campers reached the end of their tolerance of the difficult or unpleasant behavior of their cabinmates and began to give direct feedback about these characteristics. The feedback generated conflict and distress for the campers, but also seemed to precipitate change in the behaviors over the third and fourth weeks of camp.

The counselors and directors noted, and campers seemed to confirm, a dynamic occurring between independence and attachment/affection. Campers were aware of their independence from family and, to some extent, from counselors. At the same time, they formed strong attachments to older campers and sought affection from them. One director described the ten-year-olds as in a stage between where adults do things for them and where they do things for themselves; and in this stage, the girls are not quite sure that they want the responsibility that comes with the independence.

The analysis of the rich descriptive data is continuing. It is important when studying the nature of the camp experience that we know of what it consists. In this camp at least, it would be insufficient to describe the camp experience in terms of the program activities; for the young campers, a large measure of their camp experience consisted of free, imaginative play and times spent "visiting" with older campers. The results of camp for them were learning new skills, making friendships, learning to get along with others, and learning to be independent from family and adults.

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